

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of encoding and correlating data, the method comprising:  
receiving project information from an architect over a network for  
storage on a parts management system;  
5 storing the project information in a project information database;  
receiving over the network a manufacturer model part number from the  
architect on the parts management system;  
encoding the manufacturer model part number on the parts management  
system;  
10 storing the encoded model part number in a project information database;  
providing the encoded part number to a contractor who provides the  
encoded part number to a manufacturer via a manufacturer representative;  
receiving over the network the encoded part number at the parts  
management system from the manufacturer;  
15 decoding the encoded model part number provided by the manufacturer  
using the parts management system;  
providing the decoded manufacturer model part number to the  
manufacturer; and  
retrieving and providing the at least a part of the project information to  
20 the manufacturer.
2. The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising receiving an  
information type and a text message in association with the manufacturer model part  
number from the architect.
3. The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising providing a  
25 manufacturer name to the contractor in association with the encoded model part number.
4. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the parts management system  
is accessed by the architect through a client application executing on a client computer  
system.
5. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the parts management system  
30 is accessed by the architect via a web browser.

6. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein a project owner is provided only viewing access to the project information.

7. The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising the manufacturer utilizing the project information received from the parts management system to generate a price quote to present to the contractor.

8. A method of encoding by the parts management system, the method comprising:

receiving a project identifier and a manufacturer model part number at the parts management system;

encoding the project identifier into a plurality of alphanumeric characters to form an encoded project identification number;

encoding the manufacturer model part number into a plurality of alphanumeric characters to form an encoded manufacturer model number; and

generating the encoded model part number using the encoded project identification number and the encoded manufacturer model number.

9. The method as defined in Claim 8, wherein the generating of the encoded model part number includes concatenating the encoded project identification number and the encoded manufacturer model number.

10. The method as defined in Claim 8, wherein the generating of the encoded model part number further comprises generating a corresponding public key and private key.

11. A method of decrypting and correlating data, the method comprising:

receiving an encoded model part number from a contractor at a parts management system;

decoding the encoded model part number provided by the contractor on the parts management system; and

providing the decoded manufacturer model part number to the manufacturer by the parts management system.

12. The method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising receiving a manufacturer name corresponding to the encoded model part number from the contractor.

13. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein decoding the encoded model part number includes mapping of the encoded model part number to the corresponding manufacturer model part number saved in a project information database.

5 14. The method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising receiving from the architect a parts quantity in association with the encoded model part number.

15. The method as defined in Claim 14, further comprising providing a price quote corresponding to the manufacturer model part number to the contractor.

10 16. The method as defined in Claim 15, wherein the price quote is generated and transmitted electronically to at least one of a parts distributor and the contractor from the parts management system.

17. A method of bidding, the method comprising:

receiving project information for a project from a parts specifier for storage at a parts management system;

15 receiving a manufacturer model part number from the parts specifier at the parts management system;

encoding the manufacturer model part number on the parts management system;

returning the encoded model part number to the parts specifier;

20 creating an architectural plan corresponding to the project, the architectural plan including at least the encoded model part number;

choosing a plurality of contractors to bid on the project;

awarding a first of the contractors the project;

choosing a plurality of part distributors to bid to supply the part corresponding to the encoded model part number to the contractor;

25 selecting at least a first of the plurality of part distributors to supply the part for the project;

providing the encoded model part number from the contractor to the parts selected parts distributor;

30 decoding the encoded model part number on the parts management system;

transmitting the decoded model part number to the corresponding manufacturer; and

providing a price quote corresponding to the decoded manufacturer model part number to the contractor by the manufacturer.

5           18.    The method as defined in Claim 17, further comprising ordering building materials via the selected parts distributor from the manufacturer represented by the manufacturer model part numbers by the parts distributor.

10           19.    The method as defined in Claim 17, wherein decoding the encoded model part number includes mapping of the encoded model part number to the corresponding manufacturer model part number saved in a project information database.

20.    The method as defined in Claim 17, further comprising providing a manufacturer name to the contractor in association with the encoded model part number.

15           21.    A method of encrypting and correlating data, the method comprising:  
receiving a first part number from a first user on a parts management system;

encoding the first part number on the parts management system to create a second part number;

storing the first and second part numbers in an information database;

20           providing the second part number to a second user who provides the second part number to a third user via a representative;

receiving the second part number at the parts management system from the third user;

decoding the second part number provided by the third user on the parts management system to receive the first part number; and

25           providing the first part number to the third user.

22.    The method as defined in Claim 21, wherein the first user is one of an architect, a parts specifier, and a project owner.

23.    The method as defined in Claim 21, wherein the second user is a contractor.

30           24.    The method as defined in Claim 21, wherein the third user is a manufacturer.

25. The method as defined in Claim 21, wherein the first part number is a manufacturer model part number.

26. The method as defined in Claim 21, further comprising receiving a manufacturer name associated with the first part number.

5 27. The method as defined in Claim 21, further comprising receiving a project identifier, wherein the second part number contains project identifier information.

28. A method of encoding and correlating data, the method comprising:  
10 receiving a first part number from a first user on a parts management system;

encoding the first part number on the parts management system to create a second part number;

receiving a first manufacturer name associated with the first part number;  
storing the first part number, the second part number, and the first  
15 manufacturer name in an information database;

receiving a third part number associated with a second manufacturer from a first user on a parts management system;

encoding the third part number on the parts management system to create a fourth part number;

20 receiving a second manufacturer name associated with the third part number;

storing the third part number, the fourth part number, and the second manufacturer name in the information database;

25 providing the second part number, the fourth part number, and the first and second manufacturer names to a second user, wherein the second user is intended to provide the second and fourth part numbers to a third user;

receiving the second and fourth part numbers at the parts management system from the third user;

30 decoding the second and fourth part numbers provided by the third user on the parts management system to reproduce the first and third part numbers;  
and

providing the first and third part numbers to the third user.

29. The method as defined in Claim 28, wherein the first user is one of an architect, a parts specifier, and a project owner.

5 30. The method as defined in Claim 28, wherein the second user is a contractor.

31. The method as defined in Claim 28, wherein the third user is a manufacturer.

32. The method as defined in Claim 28, wherein the first and third part numbers are a manufacturer model part number.

10 33. A system for utilizing a parts management system, the system comprising:

a first instruction configured to receive a manufacturer part number from a first user;

a second instruction configured to receive a project identifier;

15 a third instruction configured to encode the manufacturer model part number provided by the first user based on the manufacturer model part number and the project identifier to form an encoded model part number;

a fourth instruction configured to save the manufacturer model part number and the associated encoded model number to a project information database;

20 a fifth instruction configured to receive the encoded model part number from a second user;

a sixth instruction configured to decode the encoded model part number received by the second user by mapping to the encoded model part number to the corresponding manufacturer model part number; and

a seventh instruction configured to provide the manufacturer model part number to the second user.

25 34. The system defined in claim 33, wherein the first user is at least one of an architect, a parts specifier, and a project owner.

30 35. The system defined in claim 33, wherein the second user is a manufacturer.

36. The system defined in claim 33, further comprising an eighth instruction configured to receive project information, including at least the architect's and a manufacturer representative's contact information.

37. A system for utilizing a parts management system, the system comprising:

a first instruction configured to receive project information, a manufacturer model part number, and a manufacturer name corresponding to the manufacturer model part number provided by a first user;

a second instruction configured to encode the manufacturer model part number to form an encoded model part number;

a third instruction configured to save the manufacturer model part number, the corresponding encoded model number, the manufacturer name corresponding to the manufacturer model part number, and the project information to a project information database;

a fourth instruction configured to receive at least one of the encoded model part number and the manufacturer name from a second user;

a fifth instruction configured to decode the encoded model part number received from the second user by mapping to the corresponding manufacturer model part number; and

a sixth instruction configured to provide the manufacturer model part number and the project information to a third user.

38. The system defined in claim 37, wherein the first user is at least one of an architect, a parts specifier, and a project owner.

39. The system defined in claim 37, wherein the second user is a manufacturer.

40. The system defined in claim 37, wherein the third user is a manufacturer.

41. The system defined in claim 37, wherein the project information includes at least the architect's and a representative's contact information.